

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration of the application is requested.

Claims 1-20 remain in the application. Claim 1 has been amended. Claims 3, 6, and 11-13 have been previously withdrawn and rejoinder of these claims is requested. Claims 19-20 are allowed.

In deference to the requirement in the section entitled "Drawings" on page 2 of the above-identified Office action, a copy of the corrected drawing sheet is enclosed with this paper.

In the section entitled "Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102" on pages 2-3 of the above-mentioned Office action, claims 1-2 and 4-5 have been rejected as being anticipated by Holbert et al. (US Pat. No. 5,984,301) under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e).

The rejection has been noted and claim 1 has been amended in an effort to even more clearly define the invention of the instant application. Support for the changes is found in Fig. 3 and the corresponding description in the specification.

Before discussing the prior art in detail, it is believed that a brief review of the invention as claimed, would be helpful.

Claim 1 calls for, inter alia:

at least one sheet-gripping device for displaceably aligning the sheet, said sheet-gripping device having a single tiltable positioning table and an actuating drive displacing said positioning table in at least one of a sheet travel direction, a direction transverse to said sheet travel direction, and a direction pivoting about an axis extending in a direction orthogonal to said sheet travel direction, the sheet to be aligned being fixable on said positioning table. (Emphasis added.)

Holbert et al. do not disclose any tiltable positioning table. Also, Holbert et al. do not disclose a single positioning table. In Holbert et al. two carriages 20, 22 are provided one behind the other which are independently movable transverse to the feed path and are utilized to adjust the position of the sheet (see abstract).

Clearly, Holbert et al. do not show "said sheet-gripping device having a single tiltable positioning table", as recited in claim 1 of the instant application.

With regard to claim 4, Holbert et al. do not disclose that the positioning table is integrated in a feeding table as recited in claim 4 of the instant application. Rather, in Holbert et al. the feeding table as a whole is movably positioned so that the feeding table works as a positioning table.

With regard to claim 5, the bars in Holbert et al. are pure guide elements whereas the elastic bars according to claim 5 the instant application permit the positioning table (15) to be displaced in a translatory manner in any desired direction within the plane of the feeding table (7) (see page 18, lines 24-26 of the specification). The bars (35) according to Fig. 2 of the instant application are mounted perpendicular to the sheet transport plane.

Claims 1 and 4-5 are, therefore, believed to be patentable over Holbert et al. Since claim 2 is dependent on claim 1, it is believed to be patentable as well. Claims 4-5 are also believed to be patentable over the art because they are dependent on claim 1.

In the section entitled "Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103" on pages 3-5 of the above-mentioned Office action, claim 15 has been rejected as being unpatentable over Holbert et al. under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a); claims 7-10, 14, and 16-18 have been rejected as being unpatentable over Holbert et al. in view of Gerlier (US Pat. No. 5,140,166) under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

As discussed above, claim 1 is believed to be patentable over the art. Since claims 7-10 and 14-18 are ultimately dependent on claim 1, they are believed to be patentable as well.

Applicants acknowledge the Examiner's statement in the section entitled "Allowable Subject Matter" on page 6 of the above-mentioned Office action that claims 19-20 are allowed.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-2, 4-5, 7-10, and 14-18 are solicited. Since generic claim 1 is believed to be patentable, rejoinder of non-elected claims 3, 6, and 11-13 is requested.

In the event the Examiner should still find any of the claims to be unpatentable, counsel would appreciate a telephone call so that, if possible, patentable language can be worked out. In the alternative, the entry of the amendment is requested as it is believed to place the application in better condition for appeal, without requiring extension of the field of search.

If an extension of time for this paper is required, petition for extension is herewith made. Please charge any fees which might be due with respect to Sections 1.16 and 1.17 to the

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Respectfully submitted,



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